No request has been received from the State Government regarding shortage of kerosene oil in Jharkhand.

Availability of oil and coal in Assam

1586. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is plenty of oil trapped in shale oil and coal in Assam and Arunachal Pradesh;

(b) whether Government have any plan to extract shale oil from these places; and

(c) if so, the details of Government policy and the strategy in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) to (c) There are reported occurrences of oil shale associated with coal in Assam and Arunachal Pradesh. No assessment has been made about oil reserves in shale/coal. Oil India Ltd. in past had undertaken R&D activity with the help of a foreign company however commerciality could not be established. Directorate General Hydrocarbons (DGH) has initiated action to take up studies on resource estimated of oil shale deposits and syncrude potential in North Eastern part of India.

Charging of high rate on luxury cars by tourist organisations

1587. SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA:
SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the big tourist organizations in the country operate their luxury cars on diesel while charging very high rate from their customers thus making huge profits;

(b) whether Government are aware that this practice adversely affects the interests of rural farmers for whom particularly cheaper diesel in meant; and

(c) if so, whether Government would consider any proposal to put additional cess or excise duty on diesel purchased by the owners of luxury cars for purposes of tourism and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHAJ. PATEL): (a) Department of Tourism has a scheme for recognition of Tourism Transport Operators to encourage standard quality services so as to promote tourism. However, it does not regulate the rates/tariffs that are charged by the Tourist Transport Operators as they are free to charge rates and tariffs as per market conditions.

(b) and (c) The requirement of diesel of rural farmers is being fully met by the public sector oil marketing companies and supply of diesel to motor cars does not in any affect its availability to the rural farmers. The retail selling price of diesel is different at different places due to difference in sales tax, other local levies and the cost of positioning the product from the refinery. However, at a given place the retail selling price would be the same whether the consumer is a luxury car operator or an agriculturist. At present, there is no proposal to put additional cess or excise duty on diesel purchased by the owners of the luxury cars for the purposes of tourism

World heritage status to Buddha Monastery in Arunachal Pradesh

†1588. SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a proposal to declare the Buddha Monastery at Twang City in Arunachal Pradesh as a World heritage site is under Government's consideration;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Question does not arise.

(c) The Government of India does not declare any monument or site as a World Heritage Site. Proposals for nomination are prepared and sent to the World Heritage Committee of UNESCO for its consideration. The nominations are made from out of a tentative list approved by the UNESCO World Heritage Committee. At present, there is no proposal for sending nomination of Buddha Monastery at Twang City in Arunachal Pradesh to the UNESCO World Heritage Committee.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.